



Natural Resources Conservation Service
675 U.S. Courthouse
801 Broadway
Nashville, Tennessee 37203

October 9, 2003

TENNESSEE BULLETIN NO. 360-04-2

SUBJECT: PER - TSP Open Season

Purpose: To inform employees about the next TSP Open Season

Expiration Date: September 30, 2004.

The next Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) open season begins October 15 and ends December 31, 2003. During this open season, employees covered by FERS may elect to contribute to the TSP up to 14% of the basic pay they earn each pay period; employees covered by CSRS may elect to contribute up to 9% of the basic pay they earn each pay period. An open season election to begin or change contributions will be effective no earlier than pay period 25 (December 14-27, 2003).

Employees wishing to enroll in the Thrift Savings Plan for the first time must submit a Form TSP-1 to the State Office Human Resources Section. Only the 08/2002 version of Form TSP-1 will be accepted. This form can be found at the TSP web site <http://www.tsp.gov>.

For employees who are already enrolled in TSP and wish to change the dollar amount of percentage that is to be deducted each pay period, that change should be made by using Employee Express. Employee Express can be accessed from the I*CAMS web site using Internet Explorer (icams.usda.gov).

For employees who are already enrolled in TSP and wish to change the allocation of contributions among the five investment funds, the employee must make that change at the TSP web site <http://www.tsp.gov>.

CSRS employees age 50 and older are reminded that you must be contributing the full 9% before you are eligible to participate in the "catch up contributions" for 2004. The maximum amount of catch up contributions will increase to \$3000 in 2004. Employees must make a new election each year to participate in catch-up contributions; these elections do not carry over from one year to the next. For information on this topic please see Tennessee Bulletin 360-03-10 and/or visit the TSP web site.

/s/ SUSAN M. HOPKINS
State Administrative Officer